

What is claimed is:

- 1        1.     A method of promoting merchandise, the method comprising:  
2                receiving a communication from a sender;  
3                prompting the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender; and  
4                transmitting a communication to the sender, wherein the wireless  
5                communication comprises an advertisement that is related to the  
6                merchandise of interest.
- 1        2.     A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the advertisement comprises a  
2                message to be received by a wireless communication device.
- 1        3.     A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises audible  
2                information.
- 1        4.     A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises graphical  
2                information.
- 1        5.     A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises video  
2                information.
- 1        6.     A method as defined in Claim 2, further comprising:  
2                transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the  
3                merchandise of interest.
- 1        7.     A method as defined in Claim 6, wherein the coupon comprises a text  
2                message to be received by the wireless communication device.

- 1           8.     A method as defined in Claim 6, wherein the coupon comprises graphical  
2                   information to be received by the wireless communication device.
- 1           9.     A method as defined in Claim 7, wherein the coupon is transmitted at the  
2                   option of the sender.
- 1           10.    A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein prompting comprises:  
2                   transmitting a wireless communication to the sender, the wireless  
3                   communication comprising an audibly discernable list of shopping  
4                   centers; and  
5                   receiving a selection of a shopping center from the sender.
- 1           11.    A method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a shopping center  
3                   selected by the sender.
- 1           12.    A method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a  
3                   shopping center selected by the sender; and  
4                   receiving a store selection from the sender.
- 1           13.    A method as defined in Claim 12, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a store selected  
3                   by the sender.

- 1           14.    A method as defined in Claim 12, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a  
3                   store selected by the sender; and  
4                   receiving a merchandise selection from the sender.
- 1           15.    A method as defined in Claim 14, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to merchandise  
3                   selected by the sender.
- 1           16.    A method as defined in Claim 15, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the  
3                   merchandise selected by the sender.
- 1           17.    A method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise  
3                   available at a source specified by the sender.
- 1           18.    A method as defined in Claim 17, further comprising:  
2                   receiving from the sender a merchandise selection.
- 1           19.    A method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is applicable to  
3                   merchandise selected by the sender.
- 1           20.    A method as defined in Claim 19, wherein the coupon comprises textual  
2                   information to be received on a wireless communications device.

- 1           21.    A method as defined in Claim 19, wherein the coupon comprises graphical  
2                   information to be received on a wireless communications device.

- 1           22.    A method of obtaining information regarding merchandise, the method  
2                    comprising:  
3                    transmitting a wireless communication that specifies merchandise and a  
4                    source of the merchandise;  
5                    receiving on a wireless communications device information regarding  
6                    specified merchandise.
- 1           23.    A method as defined in Claim 22, wherein the information comprises an  
2                    advertisement.
- 1           24.    A method as defined in Claim 23, wherein the information comprises a  
2                    coupon.
- 1           25.    A method as defined in Claim 24, wherein the information comprises a  
2                    text message.
- 1           26.    A method as defined in Claim 22, further comprising:  
2                    receiving a prompt that facilitates identification of merchandise of interest.
- 1           27.    A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprise an audibly  
2                    discernible list of shopping centers.
- 1           28.    A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprises an  
2                    audibly discernible list of stores in a selected shopping center.

- 1           29.    A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprises a list of  
2                   sources of merchandise.
- 1           30.    A method as defined in Claim 29, wherein the prompt comprise an audibly  
2                   discernible identification of merchandise form the specified source.

1           31.    An article comprising a machine-readable storage medium that comprises  
2                   instructions that, if executed, enable a system to:  
3                   receive a wireless communication from a sender;  
4                   prompt the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender; and  
5                   transmit a wireless communication to the sender, wherein the wireless  
6                   communication comprises an advertisement to the sender, wherein the  
7                   advertisement is related to the merchandise of interest.

1           32.    An article as defined in Claim 31, further comprising instruction that, if  
2                   executed, enable the system to:  
3                   transmit a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the  
4                   merchandise of interest.

1           33.    An article as defined in Claim 31, further comprising instruction that, if  
2                   executed, enable the system to:  
3                   transmit to the sender and audibly discernible list of shopping centers; and  
4                   receive from the sender a selection of a shopping center.

1           34.    An article as defined in Claim 33, further comprising instruction that, if  
2                   executed, enable the system to:  
3                   transmit to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a shopping  
4                   center selected by the sender; and  
5                   receive a store selection from the sender.

1           35.    An article as defined in Claim 34, further comprising instruction that, if  
2                   executed, enable the system to:  
3                   transmit to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a store  
4                   selected by the sender; and  
5                   receive a merchandise selection from the sender.



- 1           36.    A method of promoting merchandise, the method comprising:  
2                   receiving at an IVR system a communication from a sender, wherein the  
3                   communication indicates merchandise of interest to he sender; and  
4                   transmitting to the sender from the IVR system information related to the  
5                   merchandise of interest.
- 1           37.    A method as defined in Claim 36, wherein the information comprises  
2                   specials applicable to the merchandise of interest at a particular source of  
3                   the merchandise of interest.
- 1           38.    A method as defined in Claim 37, further comprising:  
2                   transmitting to the sender a coupon applicable to the merchandise of  
3                   interest.
- 1           39.    A method as defined in Claim 36, further comprising:  
2                   prompting the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender.
- 1           40.    A method as defined in Claim 39, wherein prompting comprises:  
2                   transmitting a wireless communication to the sender, the wireless  
3                   communication comprising an audibly discernable list of shopping  
4                   centers; and  
5                   receiving a selection of a shopping center from the sender.
- 1           41.    A method as defined in Claim 40, further comprising:

2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a shopping center  
3 selected by the sender.

1 42. A method as defined in Claim 40, further comprising:  
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a  
3 shopping center selected by the sender; and  
4 receiving a store selection from the sender.

1 43. A method as defined in Claim 42, further comprising:  
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a store selected  
3 by the sender.

1 44. A method as defined in Claim 42, further comprising:  
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a  
3 store selected by the sender; and  
4 receiving a merchandise selection from the sender.

1 45. A method as defined in Claim 44, further comprising:  
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to merchandise  
3 selected by the sender.

1 46. A method as defined in Claim 45, further comprising:  
2 transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the  
3 merchandise selected by the sender.

- 1 47. A method of maintaining customized advertisements, the method  
2 comprising:  
3 accessing an ad server;  
4 entering an advertisement on the ad server; and  
5 receiving, in real-time, a confirmation of the advertisement.
- 1 48. A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed  
2 through the Internet.
- 1 49. A method as defined in Claim 48, further comprising:  
2 viewing a webpage that contains a plurality of windows.
- 1 50. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:  
2 receiving at a window a synthesized audible rendition of an advertisement.
- 1 51. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:  
2 receiving at a window a recorded voice rendition of an advertisement.
- 1 52. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:  
2 receiving at a window a coupon in textual form.
- 1 53. A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed via an  
2 e-mail.

- 1        54.    A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed via a  
2                communications network.
- 1        55.    A method as defined in Claim 54, wherein the ad server is accessed  
2                through use of a wireless communications device.
- 1        56.    A method as defined in Claim 54, further comprising:  
2                receiving confirmation of the advertisement through use of the wireless  
3                communications device.
- 1        57.    A method as defined in Claim 47, further comprising:  
2                entering in the ad server times at which the advertisement will be  
3                disseminated.
- 1        58.    A method as defined in Claim 57, further comprising:  
2                entering, in advance, on the ad server a commencement date and  
3                expiration date applicable to the advertisement.
- 1        59.    A method as defined in Claim 57, comprising:  
2                specifying a boundary within which advertisements will be sent to a  
3                potential customer.
- 1        60.    A method as defined in Claim 59, wherein the boundary is the border of a  
2                municipal entity.

- 1           61.     A method as defined in Claim 59, wherein the boundary is a  
2                 predetermined distance from a retailer's place of business.

- 1           62.    A system comprising:  
2               a portal to transmit information to consumers and to receive information  
3               from retailers; and  
4               an advertisement ser coupled to the portal.
- 1           63.    The system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the portal is operative to  
2               transmit audio messages to consumers and receive audio messages from  
3               consumers.
- 1           64.    A system as defined in Claim 63, wherein the portal is operative to  
2               navigate a consumer through a sequence of queries and responses to  
3               enable a user to obtain information related to merchandise of interest to  
4               the user.
- 1           65.    A system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the portal is operative to  
2               transmit message to and to receive messages from the retailer.
- 1           66.    A system as defined in Claim 65, wherein the portal is operative to receive  
2               advertisement maintenance messages from retailer and provide  
3               confirmation messages to retailers.
- 1           67.    A system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the advertisement server  
2               comprises:  
3               an AD Setup function;  
4               a Reporting function; and

5                   an Account Setup function.

1           68.    A system as defined in Claim 67, wherein the advertisement server is  
2                   accessible via the Internet.

1           69.    A system as defined in Claim 69, wherein the advertisement sever  
2                   comprises a graphical user interface to enable advertisement maintenance.